

King County Responsible Recycling Task Force

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King County

Department of
Natural Resources and Parks
Solid Waste Division

Waste
Prevention

Resource
Recovery

Waste
Disposal

Responsible Recycling Task Force (RRTF)

- Convened at request of King County SWAC and MSWMAC advisory committees in response to China Sword
- RRTF Members are a subset of advisory committee members (~ 27 people)
- RRTF is an information sharing forum; recommendations will be referred back to the advisory committees

RRTF Goals

- **Short Term Goal:** To help identify near-, mid- and long-term actions in response to reduction in export markets for mixed recyclable materials due to China National Sword policies.
- **Longer Term Goal:** To help establish commitment across the region to “**responsible recycling**” and domestic sorting/processing of curbside recyclables.



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Outcomes

- **A report** to the King County advisory committees with actionable items and recommendations for future action
- **Interim tools** for communications and other topics where this is an immediate need

Meeting #1: Task Force Kick-Off

Date: April 30, 2018

Topics:

- Review Responsible Recycling Framework
- Task Force Goals, Outcomes, Role



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“Responsible Recycling” Framework

- Quality vs Quantity
- Harmonized Messaging
- Regional Policy Alignment
- Domestic Processing and Markets
- Demand for Recycled Feedstock
- Responsible Recycling is Not Free
- Measure Real Recycling



Meeting #1: Recommendation

The region should make a commitment to responsible recycling and domestic sorting/processing of curbside recyclables.



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Meeting #2: What's in the Bin?

Date: June 1, 2018

Topics:

- Criteria for including (or not including) materials in the commingled curbside recycling bin
- Regional Communications Consortium



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What's in King County's Blue Bins?

<i>Accepted in 100% of KC jurisdictions</i>	<i>Accepted in 60% to 90% of KC jurisdictions</i>	<i>Accepted in <40% of KC jurisdictions</i>
Makes up 90% of curbside recycled tons	Makes up 6% of curbside recycled tons	Makes up 4% of curbside recycled tons
Paper & Cardboard	Plastic cups	Plastic bags and film
Metals cans	Scrap metal	Shredded paper
Plastic bottles, tubs & jugs	Aluminum foil & trays	Non-bottle rigid plastics
Glass	Five gallon buckets	Plastic trays & clamshells
Paper cartons, frozen food containers, aseptic containers		

Meeting #2: Recommendation

All regional commingled curbside programs should remove plastic bags and shredded paper from curbside recycling bins.



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Meeting #3: Contracts, Waivers & Surcharges

Date: June 18, 2018

Topics:

- Use of recycling contracts, waivers and surcharges to address disruptions in markets for mixed paper and mixed plastics.



Surcharges

- Utilities and Transportation Commission approved temporary surcharges to cover increased costs to sort and process curbside materials
- Covers unincorporated areas and non-contract cities



Waivers

- Temporary waivers were requested of some cities with recycling contracts to allow landfilling of unmarketable materials
- Various conditions and timeframes were granted



Meeting #3: Recommendation

The region should have a coordinated and consistent approach to waivers.



Meeting #4: Domestic Processing Infrastructure

Date: July 18, 2018

Topics:

- Washington Fiber (Paper) Markets Overview
- Plastic Sorting, Processing & Markets
- Secondary MRF Model



Domestic Processing

- 17 paper mills currently operating in WA and OR
 - 10 accept post-consumer fiber (only 2 accept MWP)
- **Merlin Plastics**, Vancouver BC
 - Sorts and reprocesses plastics into pellets
- **Titus Equipment**
 - Conceptual model of how a secondary MRF can process low volume and small format materials from primary MFRs and make market-ready bales

Meeting #4: Recommendation (*in discussion*)

- Prioritize sorting and processing in the United States and Canada, to ensure that the materials generated for use as feedstock in new products are clean and suitable for remanufacture.
- If there are no sorting and/or processing facilities located domestically, prioritize countries that are members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) that have worker health and safety and environmental regulations comparable to those in the US and Canada.

Meeting #5: Working with Product and Packaging Producers

Date: August 24, 2018

Topics:

- Recycle BC Program Overview (EPR)
- National and Private Sector Sustainable Packaging Efforts



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Recycle BC: Non-profit organization

responsible for residential packaging and paper recycling in Vancouver BC



RECYCLEBC™

Sustainable Packaging Coalition: Mission is to create packaging that is good for people + environment



How2Recycle: Voluntary labeling program that helps to connect and educate brand owners, packagers and material manufacturers about sustainable packaging



Meeting #5: Recommendation (*in discussion*)

- Study Recycle BC's province-wide, coordinated program in further detail to understand how a statewide “systems approach” might be applied to our operating environment in the Northwest.
- Engage producers in recycling solutions in order to achieve a system of sustainable and responsible recycling.

Meeting #6: Policy Approaches in Support of Responsible Recycling

Date: September 19, 2018

Topics:

- Legislation for Recycling and Recycling Markets
- Plastic Packaging Stewardship
- Local and Statewide Reusable Bag Ordinances



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Legislation

- **E2SHB 2914**
 - Part 1: Public outreach and support
 - Part 2: Economic analysis
- **Plastic Packaging Stewardship**
 - Financed by plastic packaging manufacturers
 - 3rd party, non-profit stewardship organization runs the program
 - Disincentives for poorly designed packaging
- **WA Statewide Bag Legislation**

Meeting #6: Recommendation (*in discussion*)

The region should continue to elevate and put forth local and statewide policy and legislation that is consistent with helping establish a system of responsible recycling.



Upcoming Meetings (proposed topics)

- **October 26, 2018:** *Systems Approachs and New Technologies*
- **November 15, 2018:** *Draft Report Recommendations & Review*
- **December:** *Finalize Report & Next Steps*



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Recommendation Report

- Standard approach and guidelines for waivers
- Common items in commingled recycling bin
- Coordinated communications and outreach
- Prioritize domestic sorting and processing that supports a healthy environment and worker safety
- Engage producers and manufacturers in recycling solutions
- Further study into successful EPR systems

Thank you!



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